

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 095681 TOSEC 040027
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TO USDEL SECRETARY

UNCLAS STATE 095681 TOSEC 040027

FOR CARTER FROM RESTON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. THE BRIEFING FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 13 FOCUSED MAINLY ON FALL-OUT FROM THE COLUMN BY WILLIAM SAFIRE AND THE PIECE BY BERNIE GWERTZMAN IN THIS MORNING'S NEW YORK TIMES. UNFORTUNATELY, SPOKESMAN ASSERTED THAT ONE OF THE TWO ARTICLES HAD ALLEGED THAT DEPARTMENT HAD PASSED ADVANCE TEXT OF WAKE FOREST SPEECH TO SOVIET EMBASSY. NEITHER ARTICLE HAD SO ALLEGED AND STATEMENT OF CLARIFICATION AND REGRET WAS ISSUED BY PRESS OFFICE SHORTLY AFTER THE BRIEFING.

2. SPOKESMAN READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE ARTICLES:

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PAGE 02 STATE 095681 TOSEC 040027

QUOTE: THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THE IMPLICATION THAT THERE ARE SERIOUS DIVISIONS WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION ON OUR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. SECRETARY VANCE GOES TO MOSCOW WITH A UNIFIED ADMINISTRATION POSITION, APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT AFTER A FULL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AMONG HIS ADVISORS. IN THAT EXCHANGE, IT IS HEALTHY AND

PROPER THAT A FULL RANGE OF RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE
ADVANCED AND DISCUSSED.

THE TWO ARTICLES MENTIONED (SAFIRE AND GWERTZMAN)
GIVE A DISTORTED IMPRESSION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY
TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION. THE ACTUAL DECISIONS TO BE MADE
ARE BASED UPON A REALISTIC APPRECIATION OF THE COMPLEX
PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND A
JUDGMENT ON UNITED STATES INTERESTS IN THE DIRECTIONS IN
WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THESE RELATIONS DEVELOP. TO
CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE CHOICE IS BETWEEN THE
POLARIZED STEREOTYPES OF "HARD" AND "SOFT" IS TO OVER-
SIMPLIFY THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM AND THE DELIBERATE
JUDGMENTS THAT MUST BE MADE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND BY
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. END QUOTE.

3. IN GIVE AND TAKE FOLLOWING ABOVE QUOTE, SPOKESMAN
DENIED DETERIORATING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SECRETARY
VANCE AND NSC ADVISOR BRZEZINSKI. HE ALSO REFUSED TO BE
DRAWN INTO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF WHO WAS ON WHAT
"SIDE." SPOKESMAN CONTINUOUSLY EMPHASIZED COMPLEXITY OF
QUESTIONS INVOLVED, THE DUTY OF THOSE ADVISING PRESIDENT
TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS,
AND FINALLY THAT SECRETARY VANCE WAS GOING TO MOSCOW AS
ONE WHO WAS SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF A UNIFIED ADMINISTRATION.
ATMOSPHERE WAS FURTHER RENDERED EVEN MORE CHAOTIC BY
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PAGE 03 STATE 095681 TOSEC 040027

PRESENCE AT BRIEFING OF TWO CORRESPONDENTS HOLDING
PRONOUNCED CONSERVATIVE VIEWS.

4. SECRETARY'S TRIP TO SOUTHERN AFRICA WAS NOT RAISED
SUBSTANTIVELY DURING THE BRIEFING.

5. THE SPOKESMAN REFUSED TO COMMENT SUBSTANTIVELY ON
PANAMA OR THE STATUS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH SENATOR
DECONCINI. THE SPOKESMAN REFUSED TO GIVE OUT ANY NEW
INFORMATION ON THE SHEVCHENKO AFFAIR.

6. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION ABOUT THE USE OF CBU'S BY
ISRAEL. THE SPOKESMAN OFFERED NOTHING NEW EXCEPT TO
SAY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MCGIFFERT HAD HAD A
MEETING WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR DINITZ TO DISCUSS THE
MATTER ON APRIL 11.

7. GREAT INTEREST IS BEING SHOWN BY THE PRESS CORPS HERE
IN THE STORY WHICH ALLEGES THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD
PLANTED A NUCLEAR LISTENING DEVICE HIGH IN THE HIMALAYAS.
THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS HAD NOTHING TO SAY THUS FAR
ABOUT THIS MATTER.

8. IN CHECKING THE WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF THE BRIEFING,
NO MENTION HAS BEEN MADE THUS FAR OF THE MISUNDERSTANDING
OVER WHETHER THE NEW YORK TIMES HAD ALLEGED THAT THE
STATE DEPARTMENT HAS PASSED AN ADVANCE TEXT OF THE WAKE
FOREST SPEECH TO THE SOVIETS. ALL REPORTS EMPHASIZE A
DENIAL OF SERIOUS DIVISIONS AMONG PRESIDENT CARTER'S TOP
LEVEL ADVISERS. CHRISTOPHER

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